The
MEXICAN CRISIS
Its
CAUSES *and* CONSEQUENCES

BY

REV. MICHAEL KENNY, *S.J., Ph.D.*

KANSAS STATE SODALITY UNION
CENTRAL OFFICE
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Former Co-Editor of *"America"*, Author of *"American Masonry and Catholic Education"*, *"Justice to Mexico,"* etc.

SECOND EDITION

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INTRODUCTORY

Written by request of the editor of *Studies,* the Dublin Quarterly Review, this presentment of the conditions and origins of the present Mexican crisis was deemed by eminent authorities to whom it was submitted of such immediate and permanent value as "a poignant compendium of Mexico's story and of its United States relations to the present hour," that they urged its publication for American readers. Revised under the direction of Bishop Pascual Diaz, the distinguished Executive of the Mexican Episcopate who is now in exile for his worth and services, the "Mercier of Mexico" has honored this article with his unqualified endorsement:

"Hago enteramento mio el articulo de P. Kenny sobre la situacion de Mejico.

✠ PASCUAL,
Obispo de Tabasco."

"I make Fr. Kenny's article on the Mexican situation entirely my own."

We are confident that our readers will also make it theirs.—*International Catholic Truth Society.*

THE MEXICAN CRISIS: ITS CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

When Plutarco Elias Calles, styled Constitutional President of Mexico, proclaimed July 2, 1926, that the "laws" he had recently decreed, confiscating to the state all churches and religious schools and institutions and all properties thereof and stripping all ministers of religion of every vestige of personal rights, would, on and after August 1, be rigidly enforced, the Bishops of Mexico replied by ordering the suspension from that date of all church services and public sacerdotal functions. In the light of the immediate consequences of these acts the true inwardness of the whole Mexican situation is disclosed.

Thousands of petitions against these laws, with millions of signatures, began to roll in; but the petitions to the Lord of Law were more visibly impressive. The churches in town and country were crowded during the two weeks preceding the fateful day, and thousands were seen kneeling in the streets and spaces around the churches, while the priests and Bishops were engaged administering the Sacraments from dawn till dawn. This manifestation of Catholic Faith and loyalty was so vehemently sincere and universal among every class and calling, despite the risk of life and civil persecution, that the American pressmen who reported it to their not too sympathetic journals caught for the while the contagion of its enthusiasm.

Calles and his clique, the autocrats of this strange Republic, staged a counter demonstration. They control and are partly controlled by the organization primarily titled Casa Del Obrero Mundial, known in America as the International Workers of the World or I. W. W.; but because this communistic society is in bad odor with the American public, who nickname it "I Won't Work", its Mexican counterpart now styles itself the Regional Confederation of Mexican Workers, initialed C. R. O. M.,

and commonly called the Crom. There are some 600,000 enrolled, and though most of them are ignorant of the Crom's anti-Christian tenets, its state-backed tyranny over their jobs makes their subjection ordinarily absolute. President Calles ordered a monster Labor Parade in Mexico City on August 1, and announced that 200,000 marching workers would give the lie to the Catholic claims, and broadcast to the world that his decrees were the mind of Mexico. With the ne'er-do-wells and place-hunting riff-raff crowding into Mexico City under his friendly patronage, and his railroads free to the workers, and these under warning that absence would forfeit them their jobs, his estimate seemed no idle boast.

Reliable witnesses reckoned the straggling paraders at less than 10,000, including some 3,000 soldiers utilized to swell their ranks; and they marched through empty and silent streets. The 640,000 population of Mexico City was largely augmented by the crowds who gathered from the country for the last day of worship at the national shrine of Guadalupe; but there was none to greet the Crom parade. Sidewalks were deserted, windows were shuttered, and even the paraders' demeanor looked sullen or listless to the reporters. It seemed rather a funeral march.

Both demonstrations brought into striking relief the total estrangement of the people of Mexico in sympathy and principle from the powers that ruled them with a rod of iron in the name of a republic. There is other and ampler demonstration of their bitter hostility to this clique and their loathing of its laws. Why, then, citizens of a democracy will ask, do they put it or keep it in power? The answer is, they do not. Why they do not is a long and complex story, but its salient outlines can be simplified.

Contrasts in Culture and Outlook

In the first place Mexico is fundamentally an Indian nation. Of its population, which rose from 12,491,670 in 1895 to 15,112,608 in 1910, declined to 14,234,779 in 1920 and is estimated to have fallen over half a million since, only about two and a half millions or 18 per cent are rated white; and not necessarily pure white, for unlike in the United States where the slightest tinge of negro blood classes the tinged as negro, a strain of Indian blood in Mexicans of mainly foreign extraction is no bar to white classification. The remaining 82 per cent, exclusive of some 80,000 negroes, is made up of about 35 per cent Indian and 47 per cent mixed. These Mestizos, of half or more than half Indian blood, are classed as Indians and usually share their habits and characteristics. Hence Mexico is predominantly Indian in numbers and traditions; has in fact four times more Indians than Cortes found there, and relatively about as much Indian blood as obtained at his departure. (cf. Encylc., Cath., Intern., Britannica: Mexico.)

Spanish civilization, in preserving the Indian, did not make him white or European; but it did make him Christian. It did not nor could it mould him to the ways and precepts of the Roman civil code, but it did remould him in the faith and code of Catholic Rome; and it preserved him in that mould. It kept the Indian in Mexico with his radical Indian traits and un-European outlook; and it made him and kept him a good Indian. On the principle actuating State as well as Church, that the Indian's soul was good and the living Indian capable of good, it kept him living and it made him good.

Across the northern border of 1,833 miles flourishes a great nation of a radically different civilization. The present United States territory is six times the area of Mexico, and its Indian aborigines were proportionately numerous when Puritanism first pilgrimaged to Plymouth

Rock. Our population has grown to 115,000,000 while the Indian has dwindled to 342,406, less than half of one per cent. As in Mexico, the Catholic missionaries toiled, taught, suffered and died through all this land from sea to sea, to keep the Indian in Christian life; but their work was thwarted, undermined and nullified by a driving principle of the prevalent civilization, the antithesis of that in Mexico. This compelling, if unconscious principle or rule of action, that races which obstruct or will not fit into Anglo-Saxon progress are unfit to live and survival is to the fittest therefor, has been crystallized in the phrase, "a good Indian is a dead Indian." So, by chicane and force and alcohol and disease and economic pressure the Indian was made good in that sense. Hence we have no Indian problem, having killed it off; and, thereby our people as a whole are temperamentally incompetent to value a civilization that preserved the Indian or to appraise understandingly the problems incident thereto. Mexico, however, has other things of enthralling interest to our promoters of material progress. It is rich in gold and silver and copper and other minerals and in limitless petroleum, with their kindred sources of aggrandizement; and these attract American and other exploiters to Mexico, involving them, and their governments along with them, in problems which they are traditionally unfitted to appreciate or solve. These neighboring conditions have had weighty, perhaps dominant, influence in evolving the present crisis; but its roots go further back.

How the Indian Was Saved and Civilized

When the Spaniards entered Mexico the sacrifices of human beings on its altars, with cannibal accompaniments, were said to average some 20,000 yearly; and at the inauguration of an Aztec King from 20,000 to 50,000 victims were slaughtered in one holocaust. The Aztecs and Mayas of the ruling class retained slight vestiges of re-

markable earlier civilizations; but though some notions of the true God were transmitted, with traditions that a white man from the East had set up His Cross and preached His doctrine and promised that other white visitors would renew it, a degrading polytheism of human sacrifice was the universal practice, and the tribes generally, three-fourth of whom the Aztec conquests had not reached, lived in a state of warring nomadic savagery.

That the dominant motive of the conquerors was, as they declared, the spread of Christ's Gospel, is confirmed by the fact that such a people were, under Spanish hands and rule, transformed into devoted Christians and multiplied in the process. Not a few of the conquerors and their successors were also dominated by motives of aggrandizement and, like the North American colonists, regarded the Indian as an inferior species devoid of Christian rights; but with this radical difference, that in Mexico such views were anathematized by Church and State, and the natural rights and essential equality of the natives proclaimed and enforced. The Will of Isabella, confirmed by Papal decrees, that the Indian be treated as a freeman and spiritual equal, continued to dominate the civil policy of Spain, however imperfectly some administrators executed it; and nowhere as consistently as in Mexico.

Most minute and definite directions to governors and administrators were enjoined and peremptorily reiterated by the crown to protect and, in cooperation with the Church and its missionaries, to Christianize and civilize the natives; and the royal ear was ever open to the indignant protests of Las Casas and a long line of others just as vehement against abuse. It is from the records of such protests that defamers of the Mexican Church frame their accusations, somewhat like those critics of Aquinas who take the objections he appends to his propositions as expression of his views; whereas the dual records, of

rule and remedy as well as exception and protest, bear historic witness that lofty motives and benevolent practices in treatment of the Indians by Church and State were the prevalent rule and abuse was the exception.

Even among the Conquistadores this rule prevailed. Nunez de Guzman was cruel and avaricious and was punished for it; but Cortes, who would have perilled the success of his enterprise to stop human sacrifices but for Fr. Olmedo's prudent dissuasion, set a precedent in his initial settlement for kindly justice with Christian enlightenment to the Indian; and many of his fierce warriors exchanged their armor for Cord and cassock to become equally valiant soldiers of Christ in evangelizing the subjects of their conquest. It is doubtful if the history of Christendom presents such another heroic line as the Missionaries of Mexico. They brought the indomitable valor and endurance of the Conquistadores to this more glorious and enduring conquest.

Schools and Scholars and Missionary Marvels

The Chaplains of the conquerors were struggling with the dozen languages and hundred dialects of Mexico, when three Flemish and twelve Spanish Franciscans formally commenced that conquest in 1524. They were welcomed by Cortez who knelt with his captains to kiss the feet of the poor ill-clad friars in view of the populace, and gladly lent them his prestige and power. It was they who made that power endure, for it was they and their successors who won the hearts of the natives. The Mexicans called them "Motolinia", poorest of the poor; and their lives made that title so adhesive that one of them, their future provincial, who founded churches, schools, missions and towns from Nicaragua to the northern limits, baptized 400,000 with his own hand, and alone held whole districts in civil as well as spiritual obedience, is known in history as Fray Motolinia. Another whose

work was typical of their general procedure was Brother Peter of Ghent, kinsman of the Emperor Charles V. This princely lay-brother built numerous churches and hospitals, and soon had over a thousand natives in his primary school; which he gradually developed into a college for higher studies, a training school for teachers, an academy of arts and crafts, and a general civilizing center whence native teachers and officials went forth to cooperate with the Franciscans and other Missionaries in bringing the principles and arts of Christian civilization to the tribes of Mexico in their native tongue.

Such schools were established in each new centre for boys, for girls, and for adults, and averaged from 800 to 1,000 in attendance. Fray Zumarraga, first Bishop of Mexico, founded nine schools for Indian girls and an asylum where half-castes were trained and provided for reputable marriage. In 1544 he had catechisms, school-texts and the Bible translated into Indian "for," he wrote, "there are so many who know how to read;" and he established a printing press, the first in the new world, which became actively productive of translations, copies and original works. His famous Santa Cruz College, founded in 1534, for Indians, and San Juan de Letran for Mestizos, which, besides Latin and Philosophy, had chairs of music and of Mexican medicine and languages, sent forth native mayors, governors and teachers whose knowledge of the languages and habits of their people greatly expedited the missionaries' progress.

Meanwhile other religious orders, Jesuits, Benedictines, Dominicans, Augustinians, assisted by numerous sisterhoods, were busily pursuing the same plan of combining secular with religious instruction. The Augustinians founded the great San Pablo College, and the Jesuits San Ildefonso, for Spaniards and Creoles; and in 1553 was opened the University of Mexico, with all the faculties and privileges of Salamanca, including Arts and

Science, philosophy, theology, law, medicine and Indian languages. It was open to all irrespective of race, and in the theological department which trained a native priesthood, mastery of an Indian language was required for graduation. This, the first University in America, which soon ranked in repute with Salamanca and had in fact a wider and more practical range, produced, with its supporting institutions, a series of native poets, dramatists, historians, jurists, scientists, theologians and even journalists from the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century which the contemporary Spanish output did not notably excel, and the British Colonies had no output to compare with.

It is significant that the most notable poet of the seventeenth century, glorified in Spain as "the tenth Muse", Inez de la Cruz, was a Mestiza Nun; and the nuns of various orders, at first from Spain, but soon of native origin, everywhere sustained and supplemented the missionaries' efforts in conducting schools, hospitals, asylums and every variety of social and institutional service. It is also significant that the great University has been suppressed or degraded for a century by the revolutionary regimes, and though the countless buildings of education and benevolence still strew the land, distinguishable by their architectural and esthetic beauty, they are all profaned today, having long ago been wrested by vandal governments from the Church that built them and the uses of culture and benevolence they fostered. But priests and nuns of native blood remain, rendered more conspicuously true to the same purposes by persecution and proscription.

Instruction of the many tribes outside the narrow limits of the early conquest followed at first their reduction by military expeditions, with Cross and sword conjoined. Soon, however, the Jesuits adventured with Cross alone to the still unsubdued savages of northern Mexico

and California, territory won to Christ and Spain by Fathers Salvatierra and Kino and their comrades. Close to three score martyrs, as heroic as their now beatified contemporaries of New York and Canada, were mutilated and slain in that long emprise; but others bravely replaced them till by the Cross alone the natives were subdued to Christ. In holy rivalry the Franciscans also went northwards without military escort, to the east of the Jesuit territory, and with like result, victory by martyrdom. In 1680 twenty-one of their brethren were slain in New Mexico in one day; but they also kept bravely on, and when in 1767 the Jesuits were expelled, the Franciscans worthily took up their work and toiled unaided to keep the tribes intact and Christian. These tribes are now extinct; but the mission buildings from San Antonio to San Francisco, erected by the Indians whom these missionaries transformed into artisans and artists, are visited by admiring tourists who marvel at the solidity and fineness of their workmanship; and their architecture is copied widely through the States. Yet the contrasts they present between the civilization that so transformed the Indian and preserved him and the civilization that extinguished him, is seldom noticed, and its lesson is ignored.

Help and Hindrance of Royal Absolutism

The expulsion of the Jesuits and the confiscation of their mission properties had a doubly sinister significance. Besides the disastrous suppression of the most extensive and practical Indian mission work and of the most enlightening and morally directive institutions for the education and moulding of the governing classes, it voiced the echo in Mexico of the then moral and religious decadence in Spain; and in extending the exercise of royal absolutism it set a precedent for similar and wider usurpation in the future. Already there was little in any

department of state that the King had not been wont to direct and control personally or by his appointees. This absolutism, impeding native training to responsibility, bequeathed a civil inheritance which the strongest were to seize, in its power without its principles, and to make tyrannically absolute when they misnamed it a republic.

The King's equally absolute ecclesiastical control proved even more disastrous in its consequences. He appointed Bishops, prelates, abbots, holders of benefices, and assigned the limits of dioceses and missions. No churches, monasteries nor religious foundations could be erected nor order nor congregation introduced without his seal; and he could translate or suppress them at his pleasure. True, his appointments were usually judicious, and though nothing could be initiated without obtaining his consent through a complex series of intermediaries, when the labyrinthine red tape was unwound the King's all powerful support for every worthy enterprise accompanied his sanction. In 1557 Charles V set his seal to the proclamation of Viceroy Velasco: "The liberty of the Indian is more important than mines, and their revenues are not so valuable that all divine and human laws should be sacrificed to obtain them;" and Ferdinand VI's instruction to Viceroy Amdrillas is typical of the long line of royal directions:

"See that the Bishops and the secular and religious clergy receive all the support they need from the civil courts to uproot idolatry; that those having Indian, negro or mulatto servants send them daily to the Christian doctrine classes, and that field workers be given the same opportunity on Sundays and other days of precept, and be not otherwise occupied until they have learned the catechism, and let those who do not comply be fined. All priests working among the Indians should study and know their languages. The condition of the Indians in all New Spain should be investigated to see if they are

oppressed by those who have a duty to teach them; and should such conditions exist, they shall be reported to the bishop, that with his help measures be taken to eradicate the evil."

To the execution of such policies the Kings contributed generously, but mainly from the tithe funds of the church; for even the church tithes belonged to the Crown. These, however, and other revenues the Spanish Kings allocated freely to every kind of missionary and religious work, and have thus to their credit the multitude of hospitals and asylums, churches, convents, colleges and schools erected in their day, though private benefactors supplemented the royal grants, and in later years altogether replaced them. Hence it is clear, that, far from acquiring great wealth and absolute power under the Spanish regime, the Church never possessed either, though by a King's good will and intent she utilized as much of both as a kindly master judged helpful for her functioning. Prelates occasionally served as viceroys and governors, and conspicuously for the common good; but this in no way loosened the King's universal grasp. The Church was virtually the slave, if a favored slave, of a benevolent despot; and when the despot that replaced him waxed malevolent the Church became a slave indeed.

The fact that Mexico had no serious revolt for two centuries and was the last of the Spanish colonies to demand independence, and then as a monarchy under a Spanish King, would disprove the charges of governmental cruelty. Fray Motolinia, the beloved apostle of the Indians, branded the accusations of Las Casas as grossly exaggerated and his proposed reforms as injurious and impractical; and the Franciscan Provincial had had a longer, wider and more successful experience than the Bishop of Chiapas. Abuses there were by occasional corrupt administrators, and by the unprincipled adventurers, not all of them laymen, that plague every pioneer

country; but against them, as the Spanish archives show, there was always an outcry and a remedy. When Marquez de Gelvez abused his viceroyalty to create for himself a monopoly of the corn product of 1623, and so made an Indian famine imminent, Archbishop de la Serna took the lead of his starving people, and when other measures failed, secured redress by excommunication and interdict. This action, which soon removed both the "corner" and the Viceroy, is significant in view of the similar procedure of the present Mexican Episcopate and the people's equally vigorous response. It represents the general attitude of the clergy in exercising what influence they held in favor of their people, especially the native races, and it accounts for the people's unswerving loyalty to them.

From the time of Charles III the religious and administrative laxity of Spain was reflected in her colonies, tending to license rather than restraint. With the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, the numerous and flourishing Indian villages and townships of northwestern Mexico, in which they had established municipal government on the Spanish plan with central church and self-supporting trades and tillage, and other native communities similarly formed and cultured by various missionary bodies, received no longer the watchful care and intensive training that had been rapidly lifting them toward a self-sustaining civilization. The schools in which the Indian children were sedulously taught became neglected, and when the anarchic regimes that subverted the Spanish system shut out the priest from the school, seldom providing any to replace him, reading and writing became a lost art, and farming and building a primitive procedure. This accounts for Mexico's present illiteracy and industrial decay.

The exactions of Spain for home defence during the French revolutionary period created wide discontent, and

her seizure of the funds and revenues of the Obras Pias caused further economic disruption. These funds, donated for religious purposes, were invested in 5 per cent loans on convenient terms to small farmers, the interest supporting charitable and educational works. Von Humboldt, who wrote in 1810 that the schools and colleges and various benevolent institutions of Mexico were in number and character far in advance of the United States of that period, estimated the Obras Pias at $45,000,000. Though their confiscation, in disorganizing education and agriculture and charitable works, deeply aggrieved the entire people, yet so attached were they to Spain that when Charles Bonaparte usurped the Spanish throne, a representative Mexican junta proclaimed Ferdinand VII their King even against his own renunciation, and sent seven million dollars to support him. Despite the opposition of the Napoleonic "liberal" propagandists and the greedy Spanish adventurers and officials, called by the natives "Cauchupines", the Creoles and Indians stood by their King; and when the priests Hidalgo and Morelos led an ill-timed revolt in the name of "religion and our Lady of Guadalupe" against this class, the royal authority enabled the officials to suppress it with an army 80 per cent native.

Ruin Wrought By Robber "Republics"

After some years of turmoil the royal commander, Iturbide, a native Mexican, joined in 1821 the Creoles and Indians in a demand for an independent constitutional monarchy under a prince of the Spanish line. This was the Plan of Iguala or the Three Guarantees of Religion, Independence and Union; and when the new Viceroy, Don Juan O'Donoju, sanctioned it, its acceptance seemed assured. It is pertinent to notice here that, despite the numerous abuses of Spanish power and a half century of North and South America's example and incitement,

the Mexican declarers of independence grounded their claims on no such "long train of abuses and usurpations" as Britain's colonies had denounced, and far from branding their King a tyrant they sought the continuance of his rule, but without the foreign intermediaries, against whom alone lay the burden of their grievances.

However; the rejection of the plan of Iguala by the then rationalistic Spanish Cortes, which the year before had ordered the suppression of all religious houses and institutions, threw all parties into violent dissension, and Iturbide's assumption of authority as emperor was followed by revolt, and in 1824 by his execution, the usual Mexican finale of defeated leaders from Hidalgo to our day. The victorious faction framed a constitution after the United States form and called themselves a federal republic, dividing the country into some 27 states, regardless of geographical or racial or other natural unfitness therefor. The constitution looked fairly well on paper, but that was the sum of its merits. Mere paper it remained.

The people, by nature and traditional habits and the lack of that training for civil life of which the suppression or expulsion of their religious tutors had robbed them, had not the faintest idea of democracy, nor had the framers of the Republic any concept of the workings of an elective or democratic system of government; and neither have had their successors to this day. Their republics and their elections have been invariably a mockery, for this has been their genesis of power: Armed bands of self-seeking adventurers and bandits win to mastery by slaughter and destruction, executing those of their predecessors who had not got safely away with the plunder they amassed; these again amass riches by spoil and graft, till malcontents, dissatisfied with their sharings, split off into another patriotic revolt; and should they succeed, the same process is enacted *da capo*. Once

in power they get themselves confirmed by safely organized, pistol-picked electors discriminately counted, whereof the "election" of Calles is a typical example. Flores, his opponent, had the votes, but the Calles faction had the counting, to which the suspiciously sudden death of Flores gaves Mexican validity.

A Congress so selected in 1825 named one Victoria president at the bidding of the leading *guerrilleros,* and he was promptly recognized by governments eager for a share in Mexico's mines and commercial wealth. The 1824 constitution like the Plan of Iguala guaranteed the rights of the Church, but in this respect as in most others the guarantors utterly disregarded their organic instrument; wherein they were ably abetted, if not guided, by Joel R. Ponsett, the first American Consul, who had secured them United States support against Iturbide, and with other Americans was actively promoting Masonry in Mexico. It was the period when Masonry had reached such political power in the United States that a national party was formed to avert its menace; and while at its apogee it streamed over the border, its prestige attracting many to its York and Scottish Rites whom the brand imported by the Bonapartist and Spanish rationalists had not affected.

The rival factions split into "Escoseses" and "Yorkinos" and as the president was Yorkino and federal, the vice-president, who always aims to supplant him, was Escoses and Centralist; and the eagerness of each faction to gain followers, with the American consulate's encouragement, inoculated widely the Masonic virus and made Masonic membership a prerequisite for political power and the multiplying jobs at its disposal. This undermined the loyalty of many, and the Church's necessary condemnation of both Masonic alignments and their system of plunder and graft, intensified their hate and determined them to destroy the Church and its influence

with the masses, on the logical principle that as two such powers cannot co-exist, the Church must go, or go under. On this policy both factions were at one, and their hunger for available spoil speeded their invasion of the Church's rights and possessions in the teeth of their own constitution.

In 1828 they decreed the expulsion of the Franciscan and other Spanish missionaries among the Indians, with confiscation of the properties they held in trust, despite the prophetic protests of the governors in California and elsewhere, that the withdrawal of their only teachers and controllers would throw the Indians back into savagery. In 1833 they initiated the accomplishment of Masonry's paramount purpose by banishing clergy and religion from all public schools and national education; and while still claiming the royal privileges of filling vacant sees and benefices, they proceeded to confiscate further the remaining temporalities of the Church.

Count de Maistre would add a fifth note to the Church, that all her enemies are friends. It is the sole bond that has held the Masonic plunder factions of Mexico together. They were at one another's throats in a series of barrack revolutions through all Victoria's regime; and that this internecine strife for spoil and power, with consequent anarchy, was intensified during the three succeeding decades is graphically revealed in the fact that, from 1829 to 1859, Mexico had forty-seven presidents, not counting a number of rival chiefs who often played the part more effectively than the actors in the title role. It was this grasping for power of a defeated faction that precipitated the hopeless war with the United States 1846-1848; and, while the American troops were marching on the Capital, the rabid patriots were fighting bloody battles with one another and decreeing alternately further plunder of the Church. Mexico's consequent loss of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California seems a fit-

ting retribution for her utter neglect of that rich empire, except to expel the Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries and destroy the marvellous foundations they had built without her aid.

The departure of the American troops was the signal for universal strife; and a decade of civil wars culminated, after a three years' struggle of the Conservatives to conserve what was left, in the occupation of the Capital in 1861 by Benito Juarez, the worst enemy of religion to usurp the presidency till Plutarco Calles climaxed even him. His decree to suspend payment of interest on all debts recalled to the foreign creditors United States Minister Corwin's report, that after forty years of convulsions under seventy-three rulers and thirty-six different forms of government, Mexico's condition was then so hopeless that only by the intervention of foreign power could order be restored.

However, the intervention of England, France and Spain, and the apparently sinister designs of Napoleon III in creating Maximilian of Austria Emperor of Mexico, threw the United States, itself convulsed by civil war, on the side of the Juaristas. These, in the general eagerness for stable rule, had become a negligible faction till the United States, at first by unofficial incitement and, when its Civil War was over, by men, money and munitions and the threat of a huge army on the borders, enabled them to overthrow Maximilian, and put and kept the Juarez faction in the saddle.

Juarez Conpletes the Church's Enslavement, 1857

Maximilian himself had facilitated the task. The Conservative party, which was truly the people of Mexico, had accepted him on the basis of constitutional government and the Plan of Iguala; but when he declared his adherence to the Commonfort-Juarez Constitution and laws which he was pledged to repeal, they at once with-

drew their support. This alone would have caused his downfall, but only United States assistance could have made these laws prevail. The Juarez code was the culminating achievement both of Masonic radicalism then, and of Red radicalism now.

The Constitution of 1857 confirmed all previous infringements of religious rights and abolished all that was left, outlawing the Church itself as a juridic entity; and the laws of Juarez, 1859-1871, gave that instrument exhaustive statutory effect. Under Articles 5 and 27, which abolish monastic orders and the right of religious institutions and ministers to acquire property or the revenues therefrom, Juarez had laws enacted in 1859, perpetually suppressing all religious orders, novitiates, confraternities and sisterhoods, even confiscating to the State "all books, printed or manuscript, paintings, antiques, and other articles belonging to the suppressed communities." Wearing the religious habit or living secretly in community was made a criminal offence; all hospitals, asylums, houses of correction and charitable institutions were secularized; legacies to ministers or even to their domestics or "relations to the fourth degree" were made null and void; and "ministers of any form of religion cannot act as directors, administrators or patrons of private charity."

All Churches and ecclesiastical residences and appurtenances were declared state property and their use was permitted only in accord with state regulations, "but no religious rite shall take place outside of the Church buildings anywhere in the republic, including cemeteries, vaults and crypts which no cleric shall enter, nor shall ministers wear ecclesiastical dress or insignia." The laws of 1859 made marriage a civil contract only and nullified all marriages not so contracted, the State alone determining validity, nullity, divorce and all other marriage questions. Not only was the Church forbidden to teach, but

all religious instruction in public institutions was prohibited, and the name of God was eliminated from oaths and other civil formalities and instruments of public instruction. Other "Reform Laws" of like purport were enacted and in 1874 President Tejada raised many of them to constitutional rank. A study of this cumulative system of exhaustive persecution seems to justify the claim of Calles that he is but executing the laws he had found already enacted. The most despotic persecutor can go no lengths for which the Juarez system will not find him warrant.

This orgy of penal laws was hampered in execution by similar orgies of revolt and strife, assassination, confiscation and universal anarchy. Neither Juarez nor Tejada, his understudy, ever held undisputed sway outside the capital; and priests continued to function where and how they could, risking and often suffering exile, imprisonment and death. Jesuits and others who in 1873 were discovered in "felonious" operation were expelled and in 1874 three hundred Sisters of Charity were deported on the charge of "secretly undermining the lawful government of Mexico." To offset such perils a "national church" had been set up with government and Masonic patronage, and when this collapsed various United States sects were let loose on the starving people. Though their hunger-driven proselytes were few and unstable, their calumnious reports proved valuable propaganda for their radical patrons, fostering further antipathy to the Mexican Church and corresponding sympathy for her "liberal" perseeutors. The intensified extension of such propaganda with its reaction on official headquarters in Washington has become an important factor in the present crisis.

Religious Revival Under the Diaz Toleration

From 1876 to 1910 its activity diminished. Having seized the capital and the presidency in the usual fashion

after years of sanguinary war with the Juaristas, Porfirio Diaz became the first and only president of Mexico to extend his authority over the whole nation, to extinguish brigandage and establish peace and financial stability, and to interrupt the anti-clerical policy of priest-baiting and Church robbery. The Juarez laws remained; but Diaz knew how to prevent or temper their incidence and thus allow the harried Church, stripped naked of all but her inherent spiritual power, to function ever so quietly and lead an underground life unmolested. She was still a mere slave, but a slave protected against notable abuse.

Making the best of this constructive toleration, she gradually re-established her churches and opened some 2,000 schools and institutions among the Indian population, often where she had suffered a dozen confiscations; and she re-established and reorganized her seminaries. From the priestly training and the apostolic labors of that period was begotten the marvelous heroism of faith and loyalty displayed by priests and people in the present crisis. At the end of the Diaz period some 2,000 free schools and colleges and practically all the rural schools, since the inadequate state system seldom extended beyond the cities, together with all the hospitals and numerous benevolent institutions of Mexico, were maintained, and maintained free, by clergy and sisterhoods that were penniless, entirely dependent on the generous charity of rich and poor.

This disposes of two of the three main charges brought against the Mexican Church: that she has amassed immense riches, kept the people in ignorance, and in the Spanish period maintained herself by the murderous repression of the Inquisition. All three are calumnious myths, invented in the lodges and forged, fashioned and propagated for American consumption. Whatever the Inquisition may be charged with elsewhere, it has a clear record in Mexico. All Indians were exempt from its jur-

isdiction, and in 277 years the sum total of its death penalties was 49, mostly foreign disturbers whom any criminal court would so sentence; which sustains the conclusion of a recent reviewer that our gunmen have wrought more destruction in a year than had the Spanish Inquisition in three centuries.

The salient historic facts recorded not only preclude the amassing of wealth by the Church but charge to her despoilers the illiteracy and poverty of the peons. The Indians were always exempt from the Church tithes, and these, moreover, were applied by the King to the Christian and industrial education of the natives. The expulsion by Charles III of their Jesuit civilizers with the confiscation of the properties held in trust for their people, and the later seizure of the other mission properties and of the Obras Pias funds that sustained education and agriculture, set back the industrial and cultural development of the whole population.

Yet, despite these handicaps, education was more general among all classes at the opening of the revolutionary era than it ever has been since. The Church and her ministers had so far been able largely to arrest the downward trend by their labors and the donations they secured. Thereafter they had to repeat the process indefinitely, for every tangible property acquired by the Church for the education and uplift of the people was seized, wherever their sway extended, by the successive revolutionary factions, who invariably used power as an avenue to pelf and never erected an educational edifice on the ruins they had made. Diaz was the sole exception; and when he fell the tolerated security of the Church fell with him, and therewith the educational and social restoration which her ministry had mainly effected.

Diaz' arbitrary rule of three decades was legitimized by the general assent. Holding down the restive and hungry factions with a strong hand and occasional scraps,

he stabilized finance and promoted industry and commerce by the aid of foreign investors, chiefly from the United States, whose experience and enterprise he welcomed and facilitated. It was Americans who built up the Mexican railroad mileage from a few hundred to 15,000 miles, opened and reopened mines, established manufactures and controlled or owned the most productive industries and much of the best land. Their success while adding vastly to the country's wealth and general prosperity begot native jealousy of the progressive "Gringoes", which was fanned by envious American exploiters who had failed to secure concessions. This was accentuated about 1910 when the importance of petroleum and the inexhaustible riches of Mexico's oilfields were realized. Then two small factions hostile to Diaz, powerfully supported by the Masonic and evangelistic elements intolerant of his tolerance, filled the hospitable American press with the infamies of Diaz absolutism, and, with American arms, opened revolution on the border. Had the American government exercised half the energy it displayed in arresting like movements against Obregon and Calles, the Madero-Magon operations could not have even started. Seeing clearly the American writing on the wall, Diaz resigned, and soon Madero became president.

U. S. Intervention Props Persecution and Plunder

Madero, an educated but ill-balanced idealist, antagonized the self-seekers who had used him as a figurehead. He would give them industrial justice when they wanted spoil, and, what they least desired, a free democracy by honest elections. This prospect, the first of the kind in Mexico, stirred the Catholic Union to activity, and it soon became evident that with a free vote and a fair count they would sweep the elections, federal and state. Such an outcome would be alike disastrous to the Masonic

KANSAS STATE SODALITY UNION
CENTRAL OFFICE

Radicals and Protestant evangelists, the Crom or I. W. W. communists and bandits, and not a few concessionist adventurers; and so another revolution started in the North with American arms and munitions. There is a persistent report from well informed quarters that Diaz alienated the Washington administration by refusal to lease them Magdalena Bay, a fine harbor well suited for a naval base in Mexican California which Japan is also said to covet, and that it was Madero's failure to ratify the promise of this lease that transferred American support to his motley opponents.

An unlooked for event foiled their plans for the moment. Felix Diaz, nephew of Porfirio, landed in Vera Cruz with European munitions, and triumphantly entered the capital, the Porfirian soldiers flocking to his standard. To prevent useless butchery, General Huerta, whose strength had maintained the government thus far, made terms whereby Madero surrendered and Huerta became provisional President. An Indian like Diaz, he proceeded to govern with such firmness and justice and so satisfy the orderly elements, native and foreign, that his government was soon recognized by England and Germany, and United States recognition, recommended by her Ambassador and Consuls, was deferred only in view of the approaching inauguration of a new Executive. President Wilson assumed a diametrically opposite policy; whence issued the orgy of anarchy and persecution that culminated in the decrees of Calles.

For the first time in Republican Mexico the President opened Congress in the name of God and urged it to pray, and so to legislate, that God's law and peace should reign. The people applauded, but the unrepresentative Congress was hostile, and a deputation of Mexican and American Masons made the formal proposal to Huerta that on his pledge to accept their program they would secure him election and United States recognition. Huerta bluntly

ST. MARYS, KANSAS

refused the Masonic pledge, saying that a Catholic he would live and die. Soon a revolt began to form in the north, and Carranza, its figurehead, was assured of United States support by deputed representatives of the American Scottish Rite, whose Supreme Grand Master had just pledged to Messrs. Wilson and Bryan the services of World Masonry for their arbitral peace plans.

Thereafter the government's Mexican policies followed Masonic lines. Ambassador Lane Wilson, who with his consular colleagues had insisted that the Huerta government insured stability and the Carranza-Villa bandits anarchy, was recalled; and so was his successor who similarly advised. They were replaced by consuls and emissaries who associated and cooperated with as vile a set of bandits as ever raped and pillaged in the name of a republic. While the Carranza-Villa ruffiandom were desecrating altars and sanctuaries and robbing whatever religious properties were left, expelling and even violating the sisterhoods, torturing and holding priests for heavy ransom or death, and frequently for both, President Wilson raised the arms embargo in their favor; and, when they still made little headway, he seized Vera Cruz April 10, 1914, the only channel for federal supplies, and so by armed intervention hoisted Carranza and his spoilsmen into power.

That their previous and subsequent outrages were worse and more numerous than Cardinal Gibbons and the protesting Catholic societies represented and were known to the Government as such, is revealed in a bulky volume lately issued by the present administration recording the United States-Mexico official relations of 1914. It includes replies of President Wilson to Cardinal Gibbons admitting the extent and enormity of the crimes against life, liberty and religion, and deploring the inefficacy of his efforts to prevent them. His efforts to put and keep their perpetrators in power knew no such inefficacy. So

eager was he therefor, that according to his closest confidant, Colonel House, he induced Congress to reverse their position and his on the Panama Tolls in order that England, whose ambassador, Sir Lionel Carden, had secured her support of Huerta, might in return disown both Carden and Huerta and thus permit him a free hand. It so happened; and though pillage and outrage and internecine strife became ever more rampant he recognized the Carranza government, even with its 1917 Constitution before him,an instrument as comprehensively destructive of religious liberty and human rights as the Penal Laws of Ireland.

This policy did not end with President Wilson. When the robbers split over their spoils, and Obregon, usurper of the Yaqui tribal lands and chief drafter of the 1917 Constitution, had displaced and executed Carranza, he was recognized in due course by President Coolidge, though Mr. Wilson had charged the alleged murder of Madero against Huerta as a diriment impediment. As Obregon had revolted in 1920 because Carranza had picked another to succeed him, so in 1924 his chief minister, de la Huerta, revolted against him when he declared Calles his heir; and he was having like success until word that the United States had supplied munitions to the Obregon troops and freedom of transit through its territory turned his victorious march into flight for his life beyond the borders. The previous recognition of Obregon and this saving intervention, which secured the succession of Calles, was effected through what has been styled "diplomacy in oil."

The Calles Communism and American Diplomacy

From 1914 to 1920 the Wilson policies and intermediaries had, in return for concessions to favored interests, permitted or condoned innumerable outrages on the life and property of American citizens, and the Republican

Party had made this "shame to the United States" and "disgrace to our civilization" an issue in the 1920 Presidential campaign. Accordingly the Committee on Foreign Relations sent a Sub-Committee to investigate and report. This representative and competent body found the key of the situation in the Queretaro Constitution of 1917 and in the still ruling clique who had devised it. It was the work of Obregon and Calles, and when some few of the hand-picked delegates objected to its wildest provisions, they were silenced by pistol shots; whereupon harmony prevailed. It has been argued that this Constitution, with the Calles supplement and the acts thereunder, are all void inasmuch as the members were not elected, the instrument was not approved by the majority of States, and both Obregon and Calles as rebel leaders were ineligible to the presidency. But all these bars would equally void the code and laws of Juarez and all Mexican presidencies, if we except the later validation of Diaz. Their only validity was violence, and the only essential difference lies in the present more ruthless enforcement of the worst Juarez iniquities, of which the Calles compilation is the logical derivative. The 1917 anti-religious articles and the Calles Decrees only extend the drastic confiscations and prohibitions of 1857 by depriving every minister and religious, and in some respects every member of the Church, of juridic personality. Stripping the Church's personnel of citizenship and ownership, and violators and even critics of its provisions of jury trial and process of law, the Calles completion of the 1857 and 1917 Constitution rounds out a system more effectively contrived to uproot religion forever than even that code pronounced by Burke the masterpiece of perverted ingenuity.

But it has other and wider restrictions, specifically communistic, that more directly concerned the American Committee. Article 27 vests in the State the ownership

of all lands and the determination of the maximum area it shall lease to individuals; makes all previous contracts and ownership null and void; prescribes that all mines, oil wells and other interests and enterprises shall be operated by natives only; and that foreigners can retain or acquire property only by naturalization or by sworn renunciation of the right of recourse to their home government for redress. In effect, the two sets of articles mean, first, that the Catholic Church shall not function nor foreigners exercise its ministry; second, that the State may filch and apportion all property at will, including some billion dollars' worth under American title, and bar foreigners from further acquisition.

The American Committee in a voluminous report recommended a new treaty removing the Constitution's discriminations against American rights, or, in lieu thereof, occupation of Mexican ports by U. S. Marines. It would condition recognition on definite stipulations that Americans shall be free to enter, reside, teach, preach, and hold church property in Mexico, provided they take no part in its politics; and that all retroactive or other laws barring foreigners from ownership shall not apply to Americans. In brief, the Committee advised that the Mexican government should not be admitted to friendly relations until it had guaranteed such exercise of all fundamental rights as is the wont of civilized peoples.

In 1921 the Harding administration took up the question; and therewith the Mexican politicians and certain American Companies also became active. The oil magnates, who gave thought solely to their money interests, went down to Mexico and made arrangements with Obregon and Calles whereby their National Petroleum Oil Company should hold a 51 per cent and Mexico a 49 per cent interest in all oil reserves, and, in return, the Mexican Government would receive a $5,000,000 bonus, generous assistance in flotation of loans, and American recog-

nition. This last was more difficult in view of the Foreign Relations Committee's report, which weighed other things than oil; but a cabinet minister, who was later dismissed and put under indictment on oil charges, facilitated matters. Two commissioners, friendly to oil; were dispatched to Mexico, and on their report of Obregon's commercial concessions and promises contrary to his constitution, but of no change nor promise of change in its provisions, President Coolidge granted recognition September 23, 1923. When soon thereafter Obregon was hard pressed by de la Huerta it was his American oil beneficiaries who secured him Washington's saving intervention.

He had convinced them that the Constitution's prohibitions would not affect their interests; that, in fact, he had not enforced its religious nor property restrictions, and he had a convenient judiciary to interpret them. This seemed plausible then; but when Calles was counted into the presidency the true inwardness of Mexican diplomacy became revealed. Constitutionally ineligible on the triple ground that he is the son of a foreigner, had shared in the previous revolutions, and was not elected, Calles boldly reasserted his notorious Bolshevik pronouncements and, proclaiming immediate enforcement of both its anti-religious and confiscatory provisions, he had his judges to reverse their reversal of the constitution regarding the petroleum concessions. Now that he had secured American recognition and the monies of the Oil Companies, he felt safe in cancelling his commitments therefor; and for three substantial reasons.

He had secured the affiliation of the Communist Crom, his personal political faction, under the guise of a labor union, with the American Federation of Labor. When Calles' plan of confiscating private properties for the benefit of his following was personally presented to Mr. Gompers, the then president of the Federation, as

the chart of restoration of lands and rights to the defrauded peon workers, he accepted it as such, and by his influence secured for Calles and his party the support of perhaps the most powerful organization in America.

He also relied on another society whose still wider influence had helped to establish American recognition. As himself a 33rd Degree Mason and recipient of a Medal from American Masonry, both rare Masonic distinctions, and backed openly by the U. S. Supreme Council of the Scottish Rite, which conducted a political campaign for compulsory secularization of American schools, their declared supreme objective, Calles counted with confidence on the three million voting Masons of the United States. On these and other non-Catholics he had further grounds of reliance.

By affording friendly facilities to the Protestant proselyters in Mexico, while persecuting ruthlessly the Catholic Church, Calles won the enthusiastic support of the Baptist and Methodist and Protestant Alliance leagues, whose political activity had imposed their program on the nation and has long been dominating Congress and Senate. Moreover, he could reckon on the virulence of the pervasive Ku Klux Klan and the traditional Protestant prejudice, which, because restrained at home by the American Constitution, would be more readily enlisted for anti-Catholic movements abroad; and his consular and special agencies had everywhere established centres of lying propaganda to utilize and unify the forces of American bigotry. He had also noted that the Catholic attempts to stem the Wilson intervention in favor of his gang had been weak and ineffectual, and his personal experience had convinced him that the Mexican clergy would suffer whatsoever outrages meekly, for he and his kind had seen to it that suffering was the badge of all their tribe.

Hence he continued recklessly the expulsion of for-

eign as well as native priests and religious (including the papal delegates Mgr. Crespi and Archbishop Caruana, an American citizen), completed the suppression of religious institutions, and extended nation-wide confiscation and spoilation with accompaniments of murder, desecration and other crimes and brutalities too numerous or indecent for narration. There was general, if passive resistance; and the more effectually to crush it, he issued June 14, 1926, his supplementary decrees, so clamping down the 1917 Constitution that no religious institution may exist; that within the Church no priest may function except in the manner, measure, times, places and numbers the state prescribes, and outside of churches there can be no religious teaching nor service by lay or cleric, family or group, of any kind anywhere; and that the federal, state and municipal officials shall impose without jury or trial the drastic penalties prescribed for violations, and, failing so to do or to report infractions, shall themselves be subject to like fines and imprisonments with forfeiture of office.

The Mexican Resurrection

Then something new happened in Mexico. Bishop Manriguez y Zarate of Huejutla had issued in March a memorable pastoral of a quality unwonted in Mexican allocutions. It proved a trumpet call to all Mexico, and beyond. Entered in the Congressional Record by Congressman Gallivan, it has reached every quarter of the States through government mail and by its virile sincerity counteracted the Calles propaganda. Painting vividly the outrages on human rights as on religion, that this new and more ruthless Jacobinism inflicts, and the suicide which the Church's submission to State license for her every act of ministry and worship and use of even voice and pen would effectuate, he summons priests and people to wield the sword of thought and opinion before which

despotism crumbles, and defend their rights against this fury of outrage on their manhood as on their faith.

To their failure therein he traced the source of their calamities. Not only was the charge that they had played politics a lie, but it was their culpable omission to take part in fundamental politics, in those principles and problems of government on which depend the peace and welfare of peoples, that had brought down on them God's anger, of which their persecutors are but the instruments. Let them repair the omission; assert their citizenship; resist the destroyers of human right; stand steadfast nor flee before the wolf; be martyrs, if need be, for faith and freedom and go boldly to prison and to death. Let pastors set example of sacrifice to their flock. If Churches are closed make every home a sanctuary. If one school is seized, open another; and hold school under tents and trees if roofs be barred. By sacrifice of pleasure, by Christian virility, let young and old, but the young men foremost, fight God's battle; and never yield nor falter till every manacle of religious, educational and civic freedom is struck from Constitution and law. Thus will God lift His chastisement for their culpable suffrance of wrong and bring them from the catacombs to the sun of liberty.

This brave prelate's arrest and imprisonment, with cruel indignities that still continue, seem to have burnt his appeal into the heart of Mexico. Declaring acceptance of the Calles decrees apostacy, the Bishops of Mexico not only ordered suspension of Church service from the date of their enforcement, but directed the faithful on the lines of Bishop Manriquez' appeal. The universal response in sacramental devotion on the closing days of service and monster petitions against the laws, held no alarms for the Calles clique; rather deepened their reliance on Protestant prejudice, which this striking Catholic manifestation would further enkindle. In fact, their propagandists and Protestant alliance sympathizers still util-

ize this as an argument that United States action against Calles would be intervention in a merely religious conflict to save Rome from the champions of liberty.

But another Mexican manifestation did gravely alarm them. The existing Catholic lay societies became active and, having welded the young men and women of all Mexico into a well knit League of Religious Liberty, proclaimed a boycott against buying. Calles' governing agencies, particularly his Red Army of the Crom, had been kept in hand by heavy payments and perquisites drawn mainly from taxation on every industry and article of commerce. Hence business was at its nadir, and a further slump in sales would be a severe blow to his power. It would also put the Religious Liberty League to a severe test; but they met it unflinchingly. Harmonizing with the Bishop's appeal for sacrifice the boycott became, and after nine months remains, astonishingly effective. All luxuries were banned in food, clothing, amusement and travel, and co-ordinated leaders were assigned to every state, district, city, street and square in order to make and keep this self-denying system complete and universal. The resultant fall in revenues, as vouched in U. S. reports, averaged more than 50 per cent; profits from railways and government-owned industries were turned into loss; general business has become paralyzed, the exchange value of the peso continuously lower, and the government so bankrupt that it has failed to meet the interest on its home and most of its foreign debts.

The leaders of the League were everywhere arrested and imprisoned, often tortured and murdered, and women were shamefully maltreated, but others had been provided to replace them indefinitely, and when all the honest journals were suppressed news leaflets were distributed more numerously; and the movement is still in full vigor of unremitting and heroic endurance. Bishops, priests and laymen have been held in filthy dungeons for ran-

som or for hostage. This had been a rich source of revenue, for the faithful collected the monies to save their priests from death. It is so no more. Word has gone forth that no ransom must be paid; and so martyrs multiply, lay and cleric, after the inspiration and example of the Bishop of Huejutla. Priests administer the sacraments feloniously in the homes, which are guarded as in the Irish penal days, and the "hedge schools" have had also reproduction. The mutual fidelity of priests and people at such a harrowing price has been the most telling refutation of the voluminous calumnies that so widely defamed them, and the sturdy fight they are making has stirred a sympathy in the States that is breaking the force of prejudice and propaganda.

America's Answer to Calles

Calles' calculations on Catholic inertia have also gone wrong. An article by the present writer in 1914, exposing the injustices, the Masonic provenance, and the anarchic consequences of the Wilson intervention, had wide circulation in the Knights of Columbus organ and in pamphlet, and Dr. Kelley, now Bishop of Oklahoma wrote vigorously to like purpose for the million readers of his *Extension Magazine* and in several brilliant and well-informed brochures; yet the Catholic public remained dormant. They could not be convinced that the defamations of the Mexican Church and people lacked substantial basis, and the numerous occupants of petty government offices grew indignant over the imprudence and disloyalty of "attacking the government." Dr. Kelley had not been open to this charge; but now a prelate arose who assailed the Administration's action directly and persistently.

Archbishop Curley of Baltimore, in whose primatial See Washington is situated, determined to put the responsibility where it belonged. Seeing hundreds of priests and

religious despoiled and outraged and thousands of refugees cast helpless on our borders, among them not a few Americans seeking vainly their government's protection, he concluded that private appeals to "this or that administration when it is a question of persecution of Catholics" were useless. For ten years each in turn had given unbroken support to the Red rulers of Mexico and had kept unbroken silence on their systematized outrages on human rights.

In a series of crisp articles in the Baltimore *Catholic Review,* the Archbishop unfolded for the first time the naked facts of the Washington-Mexico relations. Having reviewed the Wilson interventions and the horrors that ensued, including the organic monstrosity of 1917, he detailed, with names and dates, the negotiations by which the natural rights of men, Americans as well as Mexicans, were callously bartered for oil and money and minerals in the interest of the influential few, and how persecution was condoned for the placation of bigots. He was asking, not that we intervene in behalf of Mexican Catholics, but that we cease to intervene against them; that our Administration reverse its policy of regarding the Mexican problem solely through the eyes of the money interests while disregarding the ideals of justice that should govern the interrelations of nations. Alluding to powerful influences exerted to arrest his disclosures, he declared that as Bishop and as citizen he would not be silenced while the misuse of our power and the subversion of our principles were crucifying a Catholic people before his eyes.

The Archbishop's speeches and writings, equally cogent and fearless, put the administration apologists on a retreating defensive. Another effect was a Catholic resurgence from the inertia that had comforted Calles. Two lay Catholic magazines that affected the role of leadership had been stressing the perils of bringing the Mexican

question into politics, and other pious pacifists of political connections had also been interpreting the Holy Father's call to prayer as a prohibition of further action. Stigmatizing these counsels as "the prudence of cowardice" and "the weak-kneed attitude that has perpetuated our weakness," his Grace insisted that since Catholics, as American citizens, were largely responsible for the ruthless war on religion and liberty in Mexico, it was therefore their civic as well as religious duty to organize their twenty millions in united protest against their country's collaboration or connivance with such persecutors.

In July the Knights of Columbus National Convention, representing 800,000 members, unanimously endorsed this policy in resolutions presented to President Coolidge, and created a million dollar fund towards enlightening the American people on our Mexican relations. Their organ, *Columbia,* a monthly magazine of 800,000 circulation, has been contributing effectively thereto in a series of frank and well informed articles; and besides numerous pithy brochures of their own, they have given wide circulation to the recent admirable Pastoral of the American Episcopate, a luminous analysis of the Mexican situation and the civic and religious consequences involved. Thus, the Catholic laity have at last been put in the way of realizing their national responsibilities.

The American Federation of Labor has proved an equal disappointment to Calles. Their National Convention a month after the K. of C. meeting, felt its reaction, and President Green was called to account for his friendly transactions with the Crom, which was denounced as a subsidized political band of grafting gunmen, "redder than the Russian Reds," who cowed and forcibly dominated the workers. A resolution was forced on the executive to ascertain the real character of their Mexican affiliation, and the President was constrained to write to

Morones, head of the Crom and Calles' Secretary of Labor, dissociating the American Federation from its persecuting activities. As a result of the discussion the large Catholic membership is now in a position to repress the Federation's communistic elements and tendencies, and Calles can no longer count on American labor.

Nor has Masonry been as helpful as was hoped. The Masonic and allied societies' leaders and mouthpieces have supported the Calles policies virulently, but they have no such control of the general membership as Latin Masonry can exercise. The vast majority of the three million U. S. Masons are more American than Masonic, being both too numerous and too traditionally imbued with the principles of true liberty to be fully inoculated by the Masonic virus. Hence they are prone to take the American rather than Masonic viewpoint upon questions of national import; and some new developments gave the Mexican question more distinctively such an aspect.

Calles' Defiance; Washington's and Mexico's Reply

These arose from Calles' withdrawal of the American concessions which had secured him, with recognition, his own succession to Obregon, and from his further proclamation that the Constitution's reversion of all property to the state remains intact; that therefore a majority interest in all oil and other properties shall be held by Mexicans, and the titles of all foreign claimants who should not have applied for and been granted leases on these terms by January 1, 1927, would be *ipso facto* null. This defiance of the United States was forced on Calles by the bankruptcy his policies had created. The robbings of the few remaining Church properties had yielded little, and the confiscation of the large estates and haciendas had eliminated productive farming till land became valueless, while the consequent loss of revenue was more than doubled by the economic boycott. Hence there was noth-

ing left to satisfy or gratify his expensive army and hungry Crom supporters, but confiscation of the rich revenue producing oil lands. Calles' necessity was the Coolidge administration's opportunity to recede gracefully from its former position. Secretary of State Kellogg protested in such language against the retroactive and confiscatory decrees that in consequence the American oil companies and most foreign property holders made no application for leases; and while awaiting the first overt act against American properties, the secretary forbade transmission of war materials which the Calles government had purchased in the United States.

This action was partly occasioned by Mexico's promotion of a Red revolution in Nicaragua against the conservative government of President Diaz which the United States had recognized. Large Nicaraguan interests, including lease of a projected Canal strip and of naval bases for protection of the Panama Canal, made a sane and friendly government desirable. The Calles faction were more than suspect of promoting their Bolshevistic system in other Central-American States, and on January 10 were charged by President Coolidge with supplying munitions and forces and inspiration to the Nicaragua rebels. Hence American contingents had been sent to protect American interests, munitions were declared open to Diaz and closed to the rebels, and U. S. cruisers were ordered to intercept supplies from Mexico. Secretary Kellogg significantly branded such Mexican activity "an unfriendly act," and on January 10, President Coolidge said that the faction disturbing the legitimate and friendly government of Nicaragua was recognized by Mexico alone, and his government would continue such action as the protection of the lives and properties of their nationals should require, and of those of Italy and England, whose embassies had requested it. Later, when a Congressional resolution commended arbitration, the Presi-

dent insisted that as good faith and the right of ownership and other rights involved are inalienable, there was nothing to arbitrate with Mexico.

Meanwhile Mexican events were pointing in the direction of these utterances. While hesitating to execute his decrees against American properties and playing for anti-Catholic support through a self-appointed "Peace Committee" of American partisans, Calles arrested Bishop Pascual Diaz, secretary and executive of the Episcopate, and two American correspondents who sought to interview him. As a Mexican of Indian ancestry and American experience, Bishop Diaz commanded wide influence in both countries, and in every encounter with Calles had the better of the argument. To shut off this influence and silence the voice of the episcopate at this juncture, he was spirited away to Guatemala; for the character of a new uprising, coincident with American unfriendliness, had put Calles in a panic. The revolt of the Yaqui tribes, and numerous local outbreaks, and de la Huerta's announcement of a projected revolution for civic and religious liberty, could be disregarded while American arms and recognition were exclusively his; but the new movement was more serious.

Men of character and influence untainted by factional connections, had issued a call to arms against the Calles-Crom regime in various States and districts, and proclaimed a Provisional Government. Knowing that with a free hand such men would rally all Mexico to the banner of the Cross and liberty, Calles gathered and imprisoned in Mexico City all the priests and prelates he could reach, partly as proof to Protestant America that this was a purely Catholic movement of their instigation, but chiefly to hold them as hostages against its impact; and in March alone scores of priests and hundreds of laymen have been shot or hanged, solely as a terrorizing measure.

But the leaders made it clear that the revolution was specifically a national movement for civil, religious and social liberty, born not in Rome but in Mexico, and Catholic only in the sense that the Mexican people are Catholic. Petitions for freedom of worship and schools and press and political action, signed by over five millions of voting age, had been flouted by the Calles Chamber. The people must have voice, and unlike former revolutions of political and military adventurers with a following, this uprising draws its power and resources from the people themselves. The leaders are men of high caliber, neither politicians nor professional soldiers; but with growing volunteer forces and regular army accretions, they expect to weld the wide-spread local insurrections into one unified movement, and gradually but soon, establish their government firmly in all Mexico, and with very little fighting. This prediction seems safe, provided the Washington Government sets a practical if not formal embargo against munitions to the Calles faction. That its refusal to renew the anti-smuggling treaty with Mexico points in this direction was noted by Calles who at once made overtures to readjust his Constitution to the satisfaction of the land and oil interests of the United States. It was also noted by the Mexican Hierarchy, who have issued a statement that the moral and religious interests of the Mexican people are still more exigent. "The religious conflict," they insist, "is also an international question, since it deals with the rights of liberty of conscience, of worship, of association and of the press, which are and should be the heritage of all peoples"; and they urge their people to renew their previous monster petitions for amendment to that effect. As the content of these petitions coincides with the guarantees demanded by the U. S. Sub-Committee on Foreign Relations as the basis of any acceptable settlement, the administration will doubtless insist on their acceptance, should it continue to maintain

its present attitude against the forces of **compromise**.

Recognize Countries That Recognize Right

Herein lies the danger for the present and the future. The Catholics of Mexico seem miraculously to have risen above the allurements of **compromise** which invariably betrayed them in the past; but such an evolution is not so evident in the United States. Though the active interests working for compromise with Mexico are few and mainly motived by bigotry, the pacifists and neutrals that give them potential force are numerous, perhaps a majority. President Coolidge expressed surprise, January 23, at the general ignorance of and indifference to the fundamental questions involved; and the same day Congressman Gallivan presented a resolution to Congress requesting the administration to furnish detailed information on Mexico's violations of various American rights, and on the forms and methods of its American and even Congressional propaganda, with the instruments and paymasters thereof, employed "to alienate the American people from support of their administration."

This information, if furnished, will enlighten and astonish the public, and doubtless repress the indignation aroused by the first action of a Washington administration which, though motived by self-protection, benefits incidentally the Catholic people of Mexico. But there it will stop, if those who have brought this happy change about will not continue their enlightenment and civic influence till the principles of fundamental justice become a permanent policy in our dealings with the South American republics. Since the days of John Adams, U. S. administrations have usually favored the radical, free-thinking, church-hating minorities who seized and held power by armed force. The lesson the present administration has learned from patronizing such a faction in Mexico affords solid basis for the demand that hereafter we ac-

cord the fullness of friendly recognition to no government that does not make civil and religious liberty and justice the basis of its laws.

Make Civic Action A Religious Duty

The Catholic body has also learned a lesson in the power they can wield when they demand their civic rights imperatively and exercise their civic duties boldly. This boldness was new and not easily excited. Catholics in English-speaking countries were said, in civic matters, to possess an "inferiority complex", the enfeebling legacy of persecution. Many tolerate or welcome a patronizing tolerance and shrink from demanding equality of rights. They are affrighted, even when their religion is assailed, of "bringing religion into politics", whereas the principles of religion is what most it lacks, and because of that lack the Constitution, which is the main buttress of both their religious and civic liberties, is in danger of crumbling. Built firmly by religious minds on "the law of nature and of nature's God", the United States Constitution can be vitalized only in a religious people; and four generations of religionless schooling have so sapped their Christian vigor that half our people profess no religious belief. If the Catholic body do not infuse this vitality civically and socially into the laws and the heart of the nation, the Constitution must fall for want of sustaining force, and along with it Catholic liberties and influence. They seem to have failed to sense that such civic activity is a religious duty. We are twenty millions, almost one-fifth of the whole, and we are represented by about one-twentieth of the governors and of the Senators, and one-sixteenth of the Congressmen; while of four successive administrations there has not been one Catholic in the Cabinet, which determines the policies of the nation; not one to arrest the dominance of selfish in-

terests over international justice and human rights in Mexico and elsewhere.

The Mexican crisis has fortunately roused them from this un-civic and neutral attitude. Inspired by the keynote of the Primate of Baltimore, the Knights of Columbus have moved the nation to reversal of a perverse national policy, and acquired thereby the consciousness both of their power in the state and of their civic as well as religious duty to exercise it. They will no longer permit selfish expediency to eradicate principle nor suffer the Catholic body to remain a cipher in national affairs. They are in the way of rendering also important international service. They are now engaged in a comprehensive history of the United States, the first to enlighten the nation on the proportionate contribution of Catholics to its building. Their recent study has brought home to them the general ignorance and historical defamation of Catholic services and social conditions in all South American countries as in Mexico, and, therefore, the pressing importance of supplementing the true story of the United States by adequate histories of each of the South American peoples. This should beget a progressive betterment in understanding of the Catholic Church and harmony of international feeling and policy, and, while vitalizing the United States Constitution at home, should extend the essential principles of this soundest and wisest of democratic instruments to the governing policies of our southern neighbors.

The solution of the Mexican crisis is in the future, but its developments are pregnant with hopeful presage. It has stirred the Mexican people and particularly its manhood, whose religious fervor had required awakening, to a heroism of loyalty to their Church and a sacrificial realization of their civic rights and duties that is bound to be written into the constitution and laws of Mexico. It has exhibited the character of the long de-

famed Mexican clergy in a new and heroic light. It has unified and vitalized the energies of American Catholics, and it has brought the whole United States to better appreciation of the Mexican people, and, for the first time, to administrative harmony with their true ideals and interests. Whatever its other consequences, the Mexican crisis has proved a blessing, if in hard disguise, not only to the Mexican people, but to all the people, and especially the Catholics, of North America.

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STATEMENT OF BISHOP PASCUAL DIAZ, EXILED EXECUTIVE OF THE MEXICAN HIERARCHY, ADDRESSED TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, APRIL 7, 1927.

"I have been asked if I think there is any possibility of settling the disputes between your country and the Calles government in Mexico, or between that government and the Catholic Church. A single consideration forces me to answer 'No' to both questions. No settlement is possible between any right thinking people and an irresponsible tyranny.

"I have enjoyed the hospitality of your great country long enough to know how clearly and rightly your people think; I have heard enough of President Coolidge to believe firmly that he cannot be deceived by promises that are on their face false.

"The Calles government does not represent the Mexican people. Your people will never make friends with the Mexican people by making friends with the tyranny that oppresses them. Thousands of the Mexican people are now in arms, in determined rebellion against it. Millions, literally, are outraged by its actions, silent or impotent only because the government of Mexico is a tyranny, a ruthless tyranny, with all the means of repression in its blood-stained hands.

"Consider for a moment the suggested bases of settlement of the disputes between that government and the United States. The Mexican constitution, so-called, was never submitted to or approved by the Mexican people. It is only a loose and grandiose expression of a wild political theory set up by a selfish oligarchy to give color to its evil deeds. The Calles government, under color of constitutional enactment, seized the property rights of your nationals, along with the property of thousands

of our own people. They were bound to make these seizures, the Calles government said; by this so sacred constitution of theirs. Yet now it is suggested that the provisions of the constitution may be suspended by some device or other in order to meet the justified demands of the United States and its injured people.

"Can the United States and its people rely on a suspension of the so-called constitutional provisions with any more surety than on the constitution itself? One has only to state the question to reveal the ridiculous character of the whole ingenious series of suggestions from Mexico City.

"The so-called constitution itself enunciates a doctrine of thievery. Until that doctrine is repudiated at its base every suggestion of settlement must rest on these terms: 'Yes, we believe in thievery, but if you insist upon it strongly enough we will not steal your properties just now'.

"By all too bitter experience the Church in Mexico knows how such a procedure works out. Eager only to carry on its work of spiritual ministration to its millions of charges and anxious to avoid trouble, it relied on the promises of this and that politician that the constitution and laws would not be enforced against it. Now it finds itself and its people in a position where compromise is no longer possible.

"The Church leads no armed rebellion. It is, for instance, a fantastic falsehood to say that the venerable Bishop Orozco y Jiminez is in the field at the head of those who are so successfully resisting the government in Jalisco. But it is good American doctrine, as set forth in the Declaration of Independence, as it is good Catholic doctrine, that forcible resistance to an unjust tyranny is the righteous duty of the citizen.

"So it is with a certain pride in my people, despite my pain at their suffering that, wherever I go, I can say that

in Mexico they are true to the right and that they are justifying their faith in the blood of martyrs, as Christians did in the early days, as Americans did in their early days.

"Americans can afford to be patient. The Church can afford to be patient.

"Eventually right will triumph in Mexico as it always triumphs.

"It will not triumph through a COMPROMISE that in its very nature bears the germ of corruption."

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